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NEWS RELEASE

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Y.M.C.A. WORLD SERVICE MARKS ITS 75th ANNIVERSARY

Over 400 YMCA leaders from all sections of North America and 20 countries abroad gathered in Cleveland, Ohio on September 25-27 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of YMCA World Service, Maurice Strong, Director of the Montreal YMCA announced today. Mr. Strong serves as Vice-President of the International Committees of the YMCA's of Canada and the U.S.A., and as Chairman of the World Service Committee of the National Council of YMCA's of Canada.

Attending the three-day meeting from Montreal are J.J.F. Bancroft, G. Drummond Birks, W.A. Devereux, W. Norman Clelland, F.B. Peterson, F.G. Hubbard, C.M. McCully, and Dr. Henry F. Hall.

YMCA World Service is the overseas work of the YMCA's of the United States and Canada, and is now being carried on in 40 countries.

Not since the Y's International Centennial Convention of 1951 have so many overseas YMCA Movements been represented by their top leaders at a YMCA meeting in North America, Mr. Strong said.

Heading the list of overseas leaders coming to Cleveland to honor World Service on its 75th birthday is Charles Sherman, President of the World Alliance of YMCA's and Secretary of the Treasury in the Liberian government. The YMCA, Mr. Strong pointed out, was the first international voluntary organization to

- more -

elect an African to its top position of leadership.

Main speakers at the three-day meeting included: Paul Martin, Canada's Secretary of State for External Affairs and Dr. John S. Badeau, former U. S. Ambassador to the United Arab Republic.

YMCA World Service is a joint program of the YMCA's of Canada and the United States to help develop YMCA's in other countries, Mr. Strong said. It is administered by an International Committee made up of 244 members representing the YMCA's of the United States and Canada. It began in 1889 when two North American YMCA men were sent to India and Japan to help develop YMCA Movements there.

In the past 75 years more than 700 North American Y Secretaries have served overseas in 50 countries. In country after country, these men helped organize new YMCA's or extended the scope of YMCA's already formed. In many countries they introduced new team sports such as basketball and volleyball. They pioneered boys' work and camping. They helped launch Boys Homes for street urchins. They initiated adult literacy classes and helped start rural reconstruction centers. In each case there were specialized programs for students, young adults, and older men and women.

The greatest achievement of World Service, Mr. Strong said, is the training of thousands of local leaders - both staff and volunteer. Many of these Y-trained volunteers have become leaders, not only of the Y, but also of their communities and nations.

This year, the North American World Service goal is \$2,580,802, the largest goal in its history, Mr. Strong said. The bulk of this goal is for the support of 56 North American overseas workers. The Montreal YMCA's share is \$44,000.

Funds will go, too, for 90 projects of health, education, and leadership training. In some countries YMCA World Service this year will help build new YMCA buildings or make other capital improvements to increase the Y's capacity for community service. It will support programs of education and recreation for refugees in nine countries. It will bring Y leaders from abroad to North America

- 3 -

for additional training. And it will help support an international student service which meets foreign students at ports-of-arrival and helps them to adjust to life in North America.

The purpose of the Cleveland meeting was twofold, said Mr. Strong. One was to celebrate the 75th anniversary of YMCA World Service. The second was for the members of the International Committee to plan its program of work for the coming year.

- 30 -

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